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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 228
By Windle

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Mr. Baxter Wilson for
being included in *The Kindness of Strangers* as
printed in the *Reader's Digest*.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this legislative body honor those people who through
their personal and professional endeavors are credits to their family, community and state; and

WHEREAS, one such outstanding person is Mr. Baxter Wilson, who through an act of
kindness was one of the persons included in an article for the May issue of Reader's Digest,
"The Kindness of Strangers"; and

WHEREAS, as the former Executive Director of the Jamestown, Tennessee, Chamber
of Commerce, Mr. Wilson possesses the qualities of kindness, humility, and a love of nature and
of his fellow man; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson exemplifies the spirit and dedication that is characteristic of a
true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, his act of kindness began one day when a stranger walked into the local
chamber of commerce and asked about camping in the area; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Wilson handed the stranger a brochure for a local campground and
offered to place a call for him. Since it cost \$12, the stranger refused the phone call. Seeing
the stranger's backpack Mr. Wilson then commented that, "Most anybody around here will let

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you pitch a tent on their land, if that's what you want. Tell you what, I've got a big farm about ten miles south of here. If you're here at 5:30, you can ride with me.""; and

WHEREAS, the stranger accepted and drove out to a magnificent country house. He then realized that Mr. Wilson had invited him to spend the night in the Wilson home. There he met Mrs. Wilson, the picture of Southern charm, who was in the kitchen cooking a pot roast. During dinner Mr. Wilson explained that local folks were "mountain stay-at-home people," and he considered himself one of them;

WHEREAS, Mrs. Wilson requested that the stranger accompany her to her school in Allardt and talk to the class about his hitchhiking trip across the United States. Somewhat reluctant because in some states hitchhiking is illegal, the stranger agreed. The students were well mannered and attentive. They asked questions of the stranger and his favorite one was from a meek little girl with glasses and freckles, "You wanna eat lunch with us?"; and

WHEREAS, this stranger admits that when he left San Francisco he was thinking only of himself. He never considered that his trip might affect a child in Tennessee. Nor had he considered meeting a humane and caring individual such as Mr. Wilson; and

WHEREAS, this stranger will always remember his continental leap of faith, the state that caught him and the act of kindness from one individual that led to the renewing of his faith in America; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to honor and commend Mr. Baxter Wilson for his service and dedication to humanity and the state of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Mr. Baxter Wilson for his acts of kindness to humanity and congratulate him on being the subject of *The Kindness of Strangers* as printed in the *Reader's Digest* and wish him every continued success in future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation to Mr. Baxter Wilson with this final clause omitted from such copy.